

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) ~~The use of articles~~
An article formed of ~~from~~ a water-absorbent open-celled crosslinked acid-functional addition polymer ~~foams~~ foam and containing finely divided silicon dioxide ~~and/or,~~ at least one surfactant, or both on their a surface as an of the article for acquisition and/or distribution ~~layer, in hygiene articles.~~

2. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in~~
The article of claim 1, ~~wherein~~ said surface of said formed ~~articles~~ article has been subjected to a post-crosslinking operation by application of at least one crosslinker and heating to ~~temperatures~~ a temperature at which said crosslinker reacts with said ~~polymers~~ polymer.

3. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in~~
The article of claim 1 ~~or 2,~~ ~~wherein~~ said formed ~~articles~~ are sheets, webs, films, strands or granules article is a sheet, web, film, strand, or granule.

4. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in~~
any The article of claims claim 1 to 3, ~~wherein~~ said finely divided silicone dioxide has an average particle size of from 5 to 50 μm and a BET surface area of at least 100 m^2/g .

5. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in any The article of claims claim 1 to 4, wherein the amount of silicon dioxide and/or surfactant on said surface of said formed articles article is in the range from 0.01 to 5% by weight, based on the weight of the hydrogel foam.~~

6. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in any The article of claims claim 1 to 5, wherein said formed articles are webs or films article is a web or film from 0.5 to 10 mm in thickness.~~

7. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in The article of claim 6, wherein, in the hygiene article, only the a bodyfacing side of said webs or films web or film has been surface postcrosslinked and treated with the silicon dioxide and/or a the surfactant.~~

8. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in any The article of claims claim 1 to 7, wherein the predominantly open-celled hydrogel foams comprise foam comprises a crosslinked polymers polymer of acrylic acid.~~

9. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in any The article of claims 1 to 8, claim 10 wherein said hygiene articles are article is selected from the group consisting of infant diapers, incontinence products, femcare articles, wound contact materials, or and secondary wound dressings.~~

10. (New) The article of claim 1 wherein
the article is an acquisition layer or a distribution
layer in a hygiene article.